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CHARLES H. BLOUNT '83

THE SACRED PASSION

POINTS FOR MENTAL PRAYER

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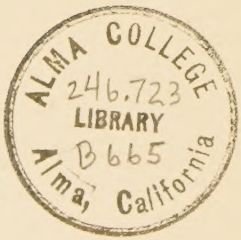
POINTS FOR MENTAL PRAYER

BY

CHARLES F. BLOUNT, S.J.



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PREFACE

THE Mental Prayer for which the Points suggested in this little book provides the material, is that which springs from the reflection of our own minds; whereas Vocal Prayer is that rather which is put upon our lips by the memory, a written book, or the voice of another. The latter is apt to be uttered before it is meant, and so become somewhat mechanical, whereas the former is meant before it is uttered; indeed, it is uttered rather in the heart than outwardly by the lips.

Accordingly, these *points* are intended to offer matter for some short reflection, and the result of this reflection should be that we soon feel urged to say something which we mean to God, or, at least, with advertence to God's attentive presence. So are good aspirations, affections, desires gradually made more and more habitual and of increasing influence in our lives.

The hymns, original or translated, which are to be found up and down are taken from that beautiful book, *Annus Sanctus,* published years ago by Messrs. Burns and Oates; the sanction of the Father-Provincial of the Dominicans was kindly given for inserting the translations of Prior Aylward, O.P. The meditations on the Last Supper appeared in a former book by the same author, and are included by kind permission of the publishers.

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THE SUPPER AT BETHANY

Six days before the Paschal festival at which our Lord was put to death, Jesus arrived at Bethany, a town somewhat less than two miles from Jerusalem. A supper was given there in his honour at the house of a man known as Simon the Leper. Martha and Mary showed their sense of the importance of the occasion—Martha by waiting on the guests, Mary by performing an act of special reverence towards Jesus. She poured some very precious perfume over his head, and the last portion of it she poured upon his feet. Judas remonstrated, and others seem to have joined in his remonstrance.

The scene, then, of the incidents that follow is the dining-room in Simon's house.

The fruit to be asked for at the beginning of each meditation, I-VI, is that we may share the sentiments of devotion to our Lord which prompted his friends to show him these signs of honour and affection.

I.—The Supper at Bethany (1)

1. *They made him a supper there.* They wish to give some proof of their gratitude, of their appreciation of all his goodness, and of his greatness also. We must do something, they seem to be saying, to show what we feel towards him. *Quid dabo tibi pro omnibus istis millibus bonis?* (What shall I give thee in return for all those thousands of benefits of thine?) Is there something of this spirit in my heart? Do I feel as if I *must* show our Lord how sensible I am of his immense kindness to me? Can I say at all with the Apostle: *The charity of Christ keeps urging me on?*

2. *Martha was serving:* no less zealously, we may be sure, than on a former occasion in her own house. How well she has taken the gentle reproof uttered then: *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and art troubled about many things: one thing is necessary* (Luke x 41). She did not say to herself: I will never serve again. No, her intention has become more simple, and consequently her heart more peaceful. Reproof must not depress us, but improve us. *Vere tu es dignus omni servitio, omni honore, et laude aeterna* (*Imit.*) (Indeed, my Lord, thou art worthy of all possible service, of all honour, of everlasting praise). Never must I give way to the feeling that comes over me at times of being "fed up" in my service of thee.

3. *Lazarus was one of those that were at table with him.* There was a certain publicity about such functions among the Jews: some no doubt who stood around were asking: Which is Lazarus? It was something of a distinction to have been raised from the dead; but was Lazarus inclined to make much of himself for that? or did it make him the more conscious of his own nothingness? God's favours should not puff us up, but make us think less of ourselves; make us, like our Lady, magnify the Lord, not ourselves.

Jesu Dulcis Memoria

Jesus, the only thought of thee
With sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far it is to see,
And on thy beauty feast.
No theme so soft, nor sound so gay
Can art of music frame;
No words, nor even thought can say
Thy most mellifluous name.

Sole hope, when we our sins repent,
So bounteous of thy grace;
If thus thou 'rt good while we lament,
Oh, what when face to face?
Jesus, that name inspires my mind
With springs of life and light,
More than I ask in thee I find,
And lavish in delight.

No eloquence, nor art can reach
The joys of those above,
The blest can only know, not teach,
What they in Jesus prove.
Thee then I'll seek, retired apart,
From world and business free;
When noise invades I'll shut my heart
And keep it all for thee.

II.—The Supper at Bethany (2)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p.* 1)

1. Mary took the alabaster box of ointment of pure spikenard, of great price. She has had it by her for some time: she has often looked at it, as those do who have something choice which they are keeping as a gift, a mark of love, for one who is in their heart. She takes it in her hands: how precious is everything, not only that *has* touched, but even that is going to touch the one who is very dear! How happy have many been in the thought of what they are hoping one day to do or to give for Jesus' sake. *Nil cogitatur dulcius* (There is nothing sweeter to think about). *Ecce nova facio omnia* (Behold, I make all things new). He gives to everything its freshness and delight, and puts new value into everything.

2. The other guests see her as she draws near to Jesus; they see the look of ecstasy on her face; they wonder what she is going to do. But Mary is truly rapt, and without thought of any but of him alone; she is quite forgetful of self and of all else, quite absorbed in him. *Ah! Domine Deus, quando ero tecum totus unitus et absorptus, meique totaliter oblitus?* (*Imit.*) (Ah! my Lord, when shall *I* be wholly absorbed in thee, and altogether forgetful of myself?) At least, I will shut out all other thoughts as well as I can, when I am approaching thy altar.

3. Jesus knows well what is about to happen, but he makes no sign; he will not trouble or disturb, or occasion any doubt or hesitation by any look or movement. Yes, he knows all, but seems so unaware, outwardly so silent. But he can speak to the heart: *Sicut solet dilectus ad dilectum loqui, et amicus cum amico conversari* (*Imit.*) (As one who is loved speaks to the one he loves, and a friend converses with a friend).

III.—The Supper at Bethany (3)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p.* 1)

1. *Breaking the alabaster box.* We know why she does this. It is to show that the gift is without recall, it is all for him. She commits herself, as one may say, to a complete and irrevocable act. She will not stop halfway, and then begin to think whether she cannot have something back, or at least retain a part of what she had meant to make a present of, nor begin to fear lest perhaps she has gone too far. Alas! many pain him thus. *O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?* After so gushing a beginning, the young man went away sad, because he had great wealth (Luke xviii).

2. *She poured it upon his head.* She has never been so bold before. Will he be displeased? Certainly not with her love, nor that her love should be without measure. *Amor modum saepe nescit, sed super omnem modum fervescit* (*Imit.*) (Love often knows no bounds, but in its fervour passes all bounds). And for the moment she is all love, and is thinking only of how worthy he is of the best. *Quantum potes tantum aude, quia major omni laude, nec laudare sufficis* (Thou canst never do enough in praise of him, who is beyond and above all praise: dare all thou canst).

3. But even before the short moment is over, the thought of her own unworthiness succeeds, and she is at his feet, pouring out the last drops of the precious perfume over them, and wiping them with her hair. If her love was uppermost for the time, it was not that her contrition had grown less. If she has been daring, it was not that she had forgotten her weakness and indebtedness. *To whom much is forgiven, he loveth much;* so, at least, it should be. To whom much is forgiven, he keeps ever a contrite and humble heart.

IV.—The Supper at Bethany (4)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p.* 1)

1. *The house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment.* And so what was being done to honour him brought sweetness and refreshment to all. What had been spent to the last drop upon him reached everyone of those that loved him, and even some whose hearts were ill-disposed. We, perhaps, may be thinking only of him, but many share in the blessing that comes from a whole-hearted gift to him. How sweet to the whole temple of God's church is the life of entire consecration to Jesus of such a saint as the Little Flower!

2. Judas, who was to betray him, muttered to those about him: *To what purpose is this waste? Why was not this ointment sold, and the money given to the poor?* So have many argued since. But the offering of the best things, the most costly gems, the most exquisite embroidery, the most beautiful music and architecture to the immediate honour of Christ, has never ceased. To suppress such offerings would be to suppress the very source of true charity to the poor, which is devotion to Christ. It is only one step farther to argue that the contemplative life and prayer itself is waste of time. As often as you did it to me, you did it to them, is as true as the converse. *Oh, for the wisdom of the kings, who chose those mystic offerings, to lay before his feet.*

3. Others of the disciples, it would seem, sided with Judas. Indeed, when did any fault-finder fail to have a following? Nothing is more infectious. Let me praise wherever I can, find fault and blame only when I must and ought. Let me be sure, too, of my motive. Judas' motive was that he made away with what was entrusted to his care for the poor, not any true zeal for their relief.

V.—The Supper at Bethany (5)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p.* 1)

1. *Why do you trouble this woman?* So we may infer that Mary *was* troubled, that the fault-finders had succeeded in troubling her. And how often is not this the very thing aimed at—not to do any real good, but to cause trouble. We seem to resent others being happy over what they have done: and why? Let us pray sometimes as the *Imitation* suggests, for those *quos aliquando contristavi, conturbavi, gravavi vel scandalizavi, verbis, factis, scienter vel ignoranter* (whom at any time I have saddened, troubled, made heavy, or scandalized, by words, deeds, knowingly or in ignorance), that God may pardon all of us our sins, and our offences against one another.

2. *Let her alone that she may keep it against the day of my burial.* There seems to be an omission here of some kind. "Let her be; it—*i.e.,* the reason why she kept it by her—was to have it ready for my burial." Our Lord seems to say that the precious perfume had never been got in a spirit of luxury or display; Mary would have been ready enough to sell and give to the poor, had this involved only some privation to herself: a word that may well set us thinking.

3. It looks, then, as if Mary had been moved to anticipate an act, which she had originally intended to perform upon our Lord's dead body. While others were looking for a triumph, she had foreseen the sacrifice, and her act was the consecration of a victim. Let us not keep our alabaster boxes sealed too long. *Bis dat qui cito dat* (He gives twice over, who gives twice as soon as he intended). Keep not your kind words and thoughts and actions till your friend is dead or gone. Bring out your best while you may.

Jesus, in thy blest steps I'll tread,
And haunt thee through thy ways;
I'll mourn, and never cease to plead,
Till I'm restored to grace.
Great conqueror of death, thy fire
Does such sweet flames excite,
That first it raises the desire,
Then fills it with delight.

Thy quickening presence shines so clear
Through every sense and way,
That souls, who once have seen thee near,
See all things else decay.
Come then, dear Lord, possess my heart
And chase the shades of night;
Come, pierce it with thy flaming dart
And ever-shining light.

Then, I'll for ever Jesus sing,
And with the blest rejoice;
Then all the vaulted towers shall ring
And echoing hearts and voices sing,
And still repeat, "rejoice."

Primer, 1706.

VI.—The Supper at Bethany (6)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p.* 1)

1. *The poor you have always with you, and whensoever you will you may do them good, but me you have not always.* Do not imagine that the time and trouble given to the direct service of Christ is time lost to the service of your neighbour and of the needy. You will always have abundant opportunity for helping those that are in want. *It is expedient for you that I go away,* he was to say a few days later at the Last Supper. And one reason is that we may live by faith, practise a higher and purer love for him, giving him of our best though we see him not, and serving him in the person of our neighbour. He does not expect us to be always with him, nor to be always alive to his presence with us, but we can be ministering to him always.

2. *She hath wrought a good work upon me . . . she hath done what she could.* Ah! my Lord, thou readest the heart; all is good to thee that is meant well. With us, *he meant well* is often but faint praise; but with thee it is the highest, and the only praise. *Non sit pax tua in ore hominum, sive enim bene sive male interpretati sunt, non es ideo alter homo* (*Imit.*). Let not your peace of mind depend upon men's tongues; for whether they interpret your actions well or ill, you are not a different man for that). If we have done what we could, our Lord is pleased with us, whoever may be displeased.

3. *Wherever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which she hath done shall be told for a memorial of her.* Here, indeed, we see the great heart of Christ, which is all on fire with love for us. What a magnificent promise, and from one who will never promise more than he performs! *Tu solus es fidelissimus in omnibus, et praeter te non est alter talis* (Thou alone art most faithful beyond all others, and there is none other comparable to thee). He is full of heart.

THE LAST SUPPER

In the afternoon before that in which our Lord was crucified he sent two of his disciples from Bethany into Jerusalem to make ready the supper, and later on he came himself with the rest. After having eaten the Paschal meal he washed the feet of the Twelve. After Judas had departed (as seems probable), he gave them his most sacred Body and precious Blood under the appearances of bread and wine, and then spoke to them at some length.

The place in which these events took place was a well-appointed room, with couches around three sides of a large table. One likes to imagine that the consecration of the bread and wine took place at a table apart specially prepared.

The fruit to be prayed for at the beginning of these meditations, and, indeed, of all meditations on the Sacred Passion, is summed up in the words of the *Anima Christi: Passio Christi, conforta me*. Passion of Christ, strengthen me, give me courage. May I have the strength to stand by our Lord in my daily life, never to play the coward, to give him all the help and support I can, and that he deigns to call upon me to give him, in his work for the salvation of souls.

VII.—The Last Supper (1)

1. The Paschal meal itself would naturally have included the eating of the Paschal lamb, the most striking of all the types of the sacrifice which our Lord was about to offer of himself upon the cross. But we cannot be quite certain if this actually took place, inasmuch as this supper may have been an anticipation of that which was to be celebrated by the people in general the following evening. In any case, the true Lamb of God was there present, soon to be truly eaten by those at table in Holy Communion: the Lamb, all innocent, all pure, all gentle and meek, that takes upon himself, and takes away, the sins of the world. Let us pray with all our hearts as in the Mass: *Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, give us peace.*

2. It would perhaps have been customary after the first part of the meal for those at table to rise and wash their hands. Our Blessed Lord is beforehand, and is seen to rise, to take off his cloak, to take a basin with water, and to prepare to wash the feet of the Twelve. What a surprise for them! Our Lord himself applies it to the need we have of being cleansed from those lesser stains which we contract in our daily path, and which he would fain remove before we receive him in the sacrament of his love. *Amplius lava me, Domine* (Wash me yet more, O Lord).

3. *Lord, thou shalt never wash my feet,* says Peter. As for that, he seems to answer, *if I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.* It is too late in the day to protest. He has washed us wholly long before he began to wash our feet. The washing away of our filth is the one great work he has made his own. We *must* allow him: we cannot face the alternative—to have no part with him.

VIII.—The Last Supper (2)

(*Renew the preludes, especially the petition, p.* 11)

1. Not only is the need of purity from lesser faults taught by our Lord, but also that of mutual service and charity. *You call me master; if I your master have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's. For I have given you an example.* A special exhortation for the priest to hear with all patience and kindness the confessions of those who are preparing for Holy Communion: a work of great charity, and also at times of great weariness, and a wonderful preparation in truth for his own reception of our Lord. The penitent, too, should study how to make the work of the priest less anxious and difficult.

2. But every kind of lowly service is recommended, towards those especially with whom we are to kneel at the Communion rails, fellow-guests of our one Lord. There had been a strife among the Apostles who should be greatest and first. Was this action of our Lord the answer? Rather strive who shall be least and last. You shall be blessed indeed if you do these things: *do* them, *be* as one who serves, not merely propose to do or to be so.

3. Take away, O Lord, from our hearts, all suspicious, indignant, angry, quarrelsome thoughts, and whatever can injure charity or diminish fraternal love (*Imit.* iv 9). Yes, we must lay aside as far as we can all resentful thoughts and feelings. How can we ever be saved ourselves except by boundless sweetness, gentleness, patience, persevering kindness? And all we do for another is a favour to Christ. Before he gives himself to us, he wishes to give us the opportunity of giving something to him.

Verbum Supernum Prodiens

Proceeding forth the Word supernal
Nor leaving yet the Father's side,
Bent on his task of love eternal,
Now reached his life's sad eventide.
But ere the traitor friend had sold him
To envious hands and deathful strife,
He bade his chosen Twelve behold him,
The food of their immortal life.

Concealed beneath the twofold token,
He gave his flesh, he gave his blood,
And thus in him, one and unbroken,
Man's twofold nature finds its food.
Our fellow, in the manger lying;
Our food, within the banquet room;
Our ransom, in his hour of dying;
Our prize in his own kingly home.

O victim of the world's salvation,
That wide the gates of heaven hast thrown,
The foe brings war and desolation;
Give timely aid and guard thine own.
To thee in triune Godhead dwelling
Be glory everlasting given;
Be ours the joys, the bliss unfailing,
That crown our endless life in heaven.

J. D. Aylward, O.P.

IX.—The Last Supper (3)

(*Renew the preludes, especially the petition, p.* 11)

1. *In qua nocte tradebatur* (On the night in which he was betrayed). The night of Christ's betrayal! A long night, is it not? still enduring right through the world's history. *It was night,* says St John ominously, when he has recorded the departure of Judas from the supper-room to carry out his black purpose. *Every one that doth evil hateth the light, that his works may not be reproved.* Is there anything we are keeping dark, or wish to be kept dark?

2. *On the night in which he was betrayed:* betrayed, given away, handed over to his enemies. But there is such a thing as being given away figuratively, let down, as the saying is, by having our failings and mistakes and misdeeds exposed by detraction. In this way we may have to share our leader's humiliation. The man of my peace, in whom I trusted, who lived with me, shared with me, who ate my bread, he lifteth up his heel against me. On the very night on which he was betrayed—*prius in vitae ferculo se tradidit discipulis,* he first on the paten and in the life-giving cup gave himself away to his disciples. To return good for evil, and that to the very last, such is the spirit of him, whose disciples we are.

3. *One of you shall betray me.* Is it I, Lord? Certainly it has been in the past. Shall it ever be so again? *Ne permittas, Domine* (Permit it not, O Lord). *He it is to whom I shall give the morsel.* This morsel was not the sacrament, and after taking it Judas went out, with Satan in his heart. Our Lord shielded him to the last, so that the others thought that Judas had gone out to give something to the poor! And me! Has he not shielded my good name?

Let old things pass away,
Let all be fresh and bright;
And welcome we with hearts renewed
This feast of new delight.

Upon this hallowed eve
Christ with his brethren ate,
Obedient to the olden law,
The Pasch before him set.

Which done, himself entire,
The true Incarnate God,
Alike on each, alike on all,
His sacred hands bestowed.

He gave his flesh; he gave
His precious blood; and said:
"Receive and drink ye all of this
For your salvation shed."

Thus did the Lord appoint
This sacrifice sublime,
And made his priests its ministers
Through all the bounds of time.

Farewell to types; henceforth
We feed on angels' food,
The slave—oh, wonder—eats the flesh
Of his incarnate God.

* * * * *

E. Caswall.

X.—The Last Supper (4)

(*Renew the preludes, and especially the petition, p.* 11)

1. *Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum* (The peace of the Lord be always with you). So prays the priest in the Mass shortly before the Communion. And our Blessed Lord had to restore peace to the troubled hearts of his disciples, before he would give them the sacrament of peace; especially as, besides what he had said of the betrayal, he had predicted a terrible thing about Peter. But in him there was no wrong intention at the time. *Wilt thou lay down thy life for me?* Yes, you will it now! But *will* you when the occasion comes, in the hour of trial? Ah, Lord, who knows? Only thou. *A te nunquam me separari permittas.* Let me never be separated from thee, nor let me ever be separating myself from thee.

2. He will bring back peace into their hearts. He assures them that, though he is leaving them, it is to get ready a place for them, that they are to be with him again one day, that meantime they know the way they are to take. Their prayers will always be listened to; another, a new helper and advocate, will be given them, no less powerful and loving than himself and more intimately present. *Consolator optime, Dulcis hospes animae, Dulce refrigerium* (Of comforters the best, Most sweet and welcome guest, Inspiring new zest). This ever-present Comforter will bring to their minds all that he has taught them. How full his Sacred Heart is of them and of all their needs. *Tu scis quibus bonis maxime indigeo* (Thou knowest so well just what I most need).

3. *My peace I give unto you. My* peace, not such as the world pretends to give. They must not be troubled or afraid. Rather they should be glad that he is going to the Father. The enemy, whom indeed he must encounter, cannot really lay hold of him. He will come forth victorious, having fulfilled his Father's commandment, which is only one of love, of love which is his one and only commandment to them.

Lauda, Sion

Sing forth, O Sion, sweetly sing
The praises of the Shepherd-King,
In hymns and canticles divine:
Dare all thou canst, thou hast no song
Worthy his praises to prolong,
So far surpassing powers like thine.

To-day no theme of common praise
Forms the sweet burden of thy lays—
The living, life-dispensing food—
That food which at the sacred board,
Unto the brethren Twelve our Lord
His parting legacy bestowed.

Then be the anthem clear and strong,
Thy fullest note, thy sweetest song,
The very music of the breast;
For now shines forth the day sublime
That brings remembrance of the time
When Jesus first his table blest.

Within our new king's banquet-hall
They meet to hold the festival
That closed the ancient Paschal rite:
The old is by the new replaced;
The substance hath the shadow chased;
And rising day dispels the night.

XI.—The Last Supper (5)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p.* 11)

1. *He took bread . . . and likewise the chalice.* Think of what the grain of wheat has passed through to become our food. *Unless the grain die, itself remaineth alone.* So it has passed through the period of obscurity and apparent death, its hidden life, its appearance at length above ground, its exposure to wind and rain and cold and heat, the ripening, reaping, sheaving, threshing, baking; and the grape, too, has been plucked, pressed, trodden, squeezed to the last drop. This is the true bread, and life-giving wine: all has been leading up to this, until at last he has found a way of giving us his flesh to eat and his blood to drink; of breaking through all barriers and making his way into our very breast. *O res mirabilis! manducat Dominum servus pauper et humilis* (O wonder of wonders! the poor, humble servant feeds upon his Lord). We, too, must break down all barriers so as to come to him.

2. For in very truth it is he who takes us into himself in this Blessed Sacrament; we become his food and drink. It is he that gives thanks—*gratias agens,* that says grace, as being the recipient rather than the giver. So thankful is he, if we will but satisfy the hunger and thirst of his Sacred Heart for our love and service. And would indeed, O Lord, that I might become entirely united and absorbed into thee, and might entirely forget myself. Thou in me and I in thee, and so grant that we may without any difference abide together in one (*Imit.*).

3. *Domine, non sum dignus.* Lord, I am not worthy; yet, at least, I am not intending to betray thee; I have not, I trust, admitted thy enemy into my heart; I am not consciously a traitor in will. Then, he answers, I will come. *Ego veniam et curabo te* (I will come and cure thee). Do, dear Lord, say not the word only, but come thyself into my house. I will prepare a place for thee, as well as I can.

Christ willed what he himself had done
Should be renewed while time should run,
In memory of his parting hour:
Thus tutored in his school divine,
We consecrate the bread and wine;
And lo! a host of saving power.

This faith to Christian men is given—
Bread is made flesh by words from heaven;
Into his blood the wine is turned:
What though it baffles nature's powers
Of sense and sight? This faith of ours
Proves more than nature e'er discerned.

Concealed beneath the twofold sign,
Meet symbols of the gift divine,
There lie the mysteries adored:
The living body is our food,
Our drink the ever precious blood,
In each, one undivided Lord.

XII.—The Last Supper (6)

(*Renew the preludes, and especially the petition, p.* 11)

1. We may suppose that after the words recorded in John xiv, which formed the subject of our meditation in n. X, our Lord and his Apostles had risen up, and gathered round some side-table, prepared for the institution of the Holy Eucharist; and that after they had partaken of his sacred Body and Blood, they returned to their couches. Then it was, perhaps, that our Lord spoke the words recorded in the following chapters of St John xv-xvii. May he speak to our hearts, too, after Communion, *sicut solet dilectus cum dilecto loqui, et amicus cum amico conversari* (as the loved one is wont to speak with the one he loves, and a friend to converse with his friend), and may we be brought thereby more and more into true sympathy with him, and to the desire of assisting him more faithfully in all his designs.

2. What more appropriate subject at such a time than the allegory of the vine and its branches. You and I, says our Lord, are one; I the vine-stock, you the branches, living by one life that passes from me into you. There is a continuity in the passing of this life from his heart into ours, every Communion being a heartbeat, a fresh pulse by which the living sap is driven from the vine-stock into the branches. *As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me* (John vi 58).

3. It was, indeed, by a special mystery that our Lord would purchase for us our supernatural life by shedding every drop of his Blood. His Blood, the life-bringing principle of his bodily frame, flows into us as grace, which is the life-giving principle of our soul. Grace passes through him into us, especially by the sacraments, above all by this blessed sacrament; and also whenever we exercise this life in action, it is not used up, but strengthened, augmented, intensified. May thy grace, O Lord, ever go before, and follow after, and make me ever intent upon doing something for thee and with thee.

Not he that eateth it divides
The sacred food, which whole abides
Unbroken still, nor knows decay:
Be one, or be a thousand fed,
They eat alike that living bread,
Which, still received, ne'er wastes away.

The good, the guilty, share therein,
With sure increase of grace, or sin,
The ghostly life, or ghostly death:
Death to the guilty; to the good
Immortal life. See how one food
Man's joy or woe accomplisheth.

We break the Sacrament; but bold
And firm thy faith shall keep its hold:
Deem not the whole doth more enfold
Than in the fractured part resides:
Deem not that Christ doth broken lie;
'Tis but the sign that meets the eye;
The hidden deep reality
In all its fulness still abides.

XIII.—The Last Supper (7)

(*Renew the preludes, and especially the petition, p.* 11)

1. The vine depends on its branches for its fruit; so the fruit of our Lord's precious Blood is to come out in those who are united to him by grace. It is to be produced in us, our lives bearing fruit, which is the glory of the vine, and of the husbandman who plants and tends and prunes it. We, however, can assist or impede the free flow of that living sap which passes from the vine-stock into the branches. We can put obstacles, block the channels, close more or less the valves; and thus the fruit, both direct in ourselves and indirect in others, is of scanty quantity or inferior quality, to the Church's great loss as well as our own. *Behold these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and I find none* (Luke xiii 7).

2. Hence our Lord's earnest entreaty, *Abide in me:* not only by faith, hope, and charity, but by endeavouring to carry out all his injunctions, by entering fully into his sentiments and plans, by assimilation of his teaching. *You are clean by reason of the word I have spoken to you.* We must try to *put on Christ:* we must desire to do nothing in which he cannot be acting through us and in us; accepting, too, all those trials by which the divine husbandman purges, cleanses, invigorates the branch, that it may bear more and choicer fruit.

3. Our Lord places before us four distinct effects of this closer abiding in him: (i) the special efficacy of our prayers; (ii) the bringing forth of *much* fruit, fruit of virtue, of edification, of conversion of souls; (iii) the becoming his disciples, fully, entirely, closely, as when St Ignatius of Antioch said before his martyrdom, *Now I become a disciple indeed;* (iv) the glory of his Father: In this is my Father glorified. How earnestly should we desire to *abide in him: Fac me tuis semper inhaerere mandatis* (Make me ever to keep close to thy injunctions).

Lauda, Sion (*Conclusion*)

Behold the bread of angels, sent
For pilgrims in their banishment,
The bread for God's true children meant,
  That may not unto dogs be given;
Oft in the olden types foreshadowed;
In Isaac on the altar bowed,
And in the ancient Paschal food
  And in the manna sent from heaven.

Come then, good Shepherd, bread divine,
Still show to us thy mercy sign;
Oh, feed us still, still keep us thine;
So may we see thy glories shine
  In fields of immortality:
O thou, the wisest, mightiest, best,
Our present food, our future rest,
Come, make us each thy chosen guest,
Co-heirs of thine, and comrades blest
  With saints whose dwelling is with thee.

J. D. Aylward, O.P.

XIV.—The Last Supper (8)

(*Renew the preludes, and especially the petition, p.* 11)

1. Having thus developed the allegory, our Blessed Lord comes to the vital thing that the allegory stands for, the vital thing, which this grace, which makes us have one life with him, really *is,* if not in its very essence, at least in the activity that characterizes this life which we share with Christ. What is the characteristic activity of the life of grace but charity, the love of God and of all men for his sake? The love of the Father has been lavished upon Christ in his human nature in the form of grace: and as the Father has loved him, so he also has loved us, his love for us lavishing itself upon us likewise in the form of grace; and as he has loved us, so are we to love one another. We live by grace in order to love, to love God and one another.

2. This was the sum total of the commandment he had received from his Father; this was the sum total of his commandment to us: that you love one another, as I have loved you, and as my Father hath loved me. *You are my friends, if you do the things I command you.* We are his friends in proportion as we love one another.

3. And especially should we love his friends, those whom he has drawn closer to himself, those who are labouring in his cause, those whom he has chosen to be his apostles, doing all we can to help them in the work they are doing for him. This love will be shown especially by example, by prayer, by removing all defects from our own lives, by avoiding all that makes it less easy for others to love and serve him. So may we form one united company, devoted to Christ and to his service: *Pacificare et coadunare digneris* (Deign to bring us into perfect peace and unity).

XV.—The Last Supper (9)

(*Renew the preludes, and especially the petition, p.* 11)

1. With Christ living and loving in us, with us, too, living to love each other in him, our strength is established in the face of a hostile world. *If the world hate you, wonder not; for it has hated me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own.* But it hates you, because you are mine, upholding my name and authority, teaching my doctrine. If we are Christ's *disciples,* we have also got to be his *apostles,* each in our own way and in our own degree. *The world has hated me,* he says, and you it will hate for my name's sake. This must be our comfort in anything we may have to bear from the world. But let us beware lest its dislike come from our being *un*like Christ, for not every Christian is hated by the world for being like Christ.

2. And apart from what we may have to bear from the world, we cannot become like Christ without interior anguish. *A woman when she is in labour hath sorrow, because her hour is come.* A man has to be born into the world, nay, another Christ has to be born; there must be labour, pain, pang. *Scalpri salubris ictibus, Et tunsione plurima, Fabri polita malleo, Hanc saxa molem construunt* (With many a stroke of mallet and chisel, noiseless perhaps and secret, is one more stone fashioned for the heavenly temple, the heavenly city).

3. This, then, is what Holy Communion is to work in our souls: Life, Love, Union, Strength: Love for one another, Strength towards a hostile world. The world is always confronting us; we have always to be opposing it within and without. It lives by the three concupiscences, we live by ever opposing them. Read over the three prayers of the Mass before the *Domine, non sum dignus;* they ask for these three things—Union with one another, Union with Christ, Strength for soul and body.

THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN

From the supper-room our Lord went with the Eleven to the Garden of Gethsemani. Eight of his disciples lay down to rest at a spot not far from the entrance into the garden. With the other three—Peter, James, and John—our Lord retired farther within; and at last separating himself even from these three, he prepared himself by prayer for the hours of suffering upon which he was to enter. Twice he interrupted his prayer to speak to the chosen three, and finally he came and went forward with them to meet the band that came to arrest him.

The place, then, in which these events took place is the Garden of Gethsemani.

The general fruit to be asked for, as has already been said, is that of true, practical sympathy or compassion: that we may be fixed irrevocably in our purpose to remain true and faithful to him, to give him the fullest support we can, and all the compensation we can; that we may never show want of gratitude, never show indifference and callousness by our way of living. Lord, may I never abandon thee, never be so unfeeling and heartless as to add to thy sufferings by offences and injuries, so ungenerous as to relax in the good purposes I have made to be thy disciple, and, so far as thou deignest to allow, thy apostle.

XVI.—The Agony in the Garden (1)

1. On arriving at the garden our Lord left eight of his Apostles near the entrance, with the words: *Sit you here, while I go yonder and pray.* They sat down, and in all probability were soon asleep, and only awoke when they were disturbed by the coming of Judas and the band of soldiers and temple police. *O quam suavis est, Domine, spiritus tuus! Tu scis infirmitatem meam et necessitatem quam patior* (How sweet, O Lord, is thy spirit! Thou knowest my weakness, and the necessity from which I suffer). The Apostles will often recall in after days how sweet and gentle their Master always was, how condescending to their weakness, how patient with their defects, how slow to let any part of his burden become burdensome to them. Did he not address them as *My little children?* Make my heart, O Lord, like unto thine.

2. He took Peter, James, and John with him a little farther, and began to be sorrowful, to fear, and to be heavy. Sorrow, terror, depression, and disgust: sorrow for the evil of sin; fear, seeing that he is to be "wounded for our iniquities and bruised for our sins," that "the chastisement of our peace is upon him"; depression and disgust, seeing that he has been seen in prophecy to be "as it were a leper," and that "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all." *Dilexit me:* He hath loved us, and is lifting the load from off our poor hearts.

3. In speaking to the three Apostles, he lays stress on his sorrow: *My soul is sorrowful even unto death.* And no wonder, for it is the evil of sin, not the vivid anticipation and realization of his own sufferings that is the most crushing of woes. It is of this especially he can say: *I looked for one that would grieve together with me, but there was none; and for one that would comfort me, and I found none* (Ps. lxviii). Bodily pain and mental shame, of these we can form some idea: but of the evil of sin, he alone can form any idea. *Holy Mary, pray for us sinners.*

XVII.—The Agony in the Garden (2)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p.* 29)

1. Our Lord's prayer: *Abba, Father, if it be possible, and all is possible to thee, let this chalice pass from me. Nevertheless not my will, but thine be done.* We need not suppose that our Lord is praying to be spared the sufferings that await him in his Passion, but rather for the mitigation of his present anguish; and his prayer was answered in due measure. He rises from his prayer inwardly consoled, strengthened, comforted. We must always remember that there are two ways in which prayer can have its effect: by bringing about a change of exterior conditions, or by effecting a change without our own selves. To be cured of a disease, or to be enabled to endure it with courage and resignation to the will of God: evidently the second of these two favours is often a far better and more wonderful answer than the first.

2. After an interruption he prayed again, and the words are somewhat different: *My Father, if this chalice may not pass from me, but I must drink it, thy will be done.* The intense repugnance of the natural will, revealed in the former prayer, has been mitigated; its force has been in some way diminished. We, too, must learn, as St Ignatius teaches us in *The Exercises,* to pray down, as it were, the resistance and repugnance of the lower and natural will, so that it may be dominated by the one great passion for the will of God, our Father.

3. After the second interruption he prayed again a third time, saying the selfsame word. Whatever our prayer may be, the more it comes from the heart, the less need there is of many, or of a change of, words. So A Kempis: *Non habeo os loquendi, nisi unum tantum verbum: Peccavi, Domine, peccavi, miserere mei, ignosce mihi* (I have no mouth to utter anything but one single word: I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned; mercy, pardon).

XVIII.—The Agony in the Garden (3)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 29*)

1. In the state of weariness, heaviness, disgust, overpowering prostration that he is in, our Lord does not change, as we see, his regular practices: *Ibat secundum consuetudinem* (He went according to his usual custom); he teaches us to gain the victory of will over mood. But, on the other hand, he does act against the desolation of his soul, adopting special measures to overcome it. *Factus in agonia prolixius orabat* (Being in an agony, he prayed the longer). I cannot, we say, I simply cannot; perhaps so, but God can; he can come to the rescue. *Fiat mihi, Domine, possibile per gratiam, quod mihi impossibile videtur per naturam* (Make that possible to me, O Lord, by grace, which seems to me impossible by nature).

2. We see him, too, using natural means to help himself, not thinking it beneath him to turn to men, to his poor, weak disciples, for support. *Sustinete hic et vigilate mecum* (Stay you here and watch with me). So in times of great weakness we say to another: Do not leave me; I like to feel you are there. How *kind* he is! He would be like to us in all things, in all our weaknesses, only without sin, choosing *assimilari fratribus* (to be made like to his brethren), that he might become merciful. *A man of sorrows and acquainted with infirmity. Ad omnia scientem loquor, cui manifesta sunt omnia interiora mea* (I speak as to one who knows all, to whom my inmost being is revealed).

3. And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, comforting him, giving him strength to bear up. See how the Father is treating him, and how Jesus accepts the support given to him by an angel. He has become, as it were, a little lower than the angels; for has he not left the ninety-nine that were safe within the fold to seek the one that was lost, the one so insignificant and yet so tenderly loved creature—fallen man? To one who has an angel all to himself it is a fact worth considering that Jesus was comforted by an angel.

XIX.—The Agony in the Garden (4)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 29*)

1. Before parting from the chosen three, Jesus had earnestly entreated them to pray: *Pray lest you enter into temptation.* And at his first visit to them: *Watch and pray; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.* Be sure that these words are addressed no less earnestly to you. Lord, teach us to pray. *Hoc est quod maxime coelestem impedit consolationem, quia tardius te convertis ad orationem* (This it is which more than anything prevents your receiving comfort from heaven, that you are too slow in betaking yourself to prayer). Prayer should, and can be, our first resource in every difficulty. We must accustom ourselves *To turn our wandering feet with constant care To the calm paths of prayer.*

2. *Lest you enter into temptation:* lest you become so entangled in temptation, as to give way, and so to add to his agony and shame. Our sins reach him far more truly than could even the most shameful actions of our nearest and dearest reach to our souls, and fill us with pain and dismay. Not, indeed, that in imploring us to pray he is thinking so much of his own sufferings; but *we* should think of them. Then, too, the flesh is weak: we fall so far short of what we might be and do for him, through want of prayer; and a time comes when nearly all he can say is: *Sleep now and take your rest;* you can no longer be of much help to me.

3. Then, too, he gives the sweetest of all reasons why he wants us to pray—viz., that we may be at his side in the struggle against evil. *Could you not watch with me one hour?* Our kneeling-stool is often our battlefield, where we either fight at Christ's side or leave him to fight alone. *Simon, dormis?* (Simon, sleepest thou?).

XX.—The Agony in the Garden (5)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p.* 29)

1. *His sweat became as drops of blood, trickling down upon the ground.* We are to form some idea of the inward agony, the interior struggle, by the bursting forth of the blood upon his brow, so that it fell in great drops upon the ground. He will not be without compassion for us in the struggle we have to carry on between spirit and flesh, between will and imagination, between unyielding, unshaken resolve and the assault of natural feeling and desire. We pray that we may be firm even to the shedding of blood. *For you have not yet resisted unto blood striving against sin.*

2. It is the outward sign, too, we may say, of the dread of that satisfaction which he has voluntarily undertaken to offer. He cannot, indeed, be punished in the true sense of the word, for that supposes guilt; but he can *give his body to the strikers,* and allow himself to be treated as one on whom *the Lord hath laid the iniquities of us all.* Could we, could the sinner, but have a vision of the position he is in as the result of his sin, he, too, might well break into a sweat of blood. *Confige timore tuo carnes meas* (Pierce my flesh, O Lord, with thy fear). It is terrible to fall into the hands of an offended God.

3. It is the expression, too, of his grief, of his sorrow even unto death: he is shedding tears of blood. It is the natural accompaniment of the contrition, the broken-heartedness, of him who has been made sin. I am sorry, O my God, for all that *I* have done, for all that has ever been done against thy law; for all that *I* have done, for all that has ever been done against thy love; against thee, the sovereign Lord, the supreme lover of men.

When Judas and his band arrived at the entrance of the garden, the eight disciples were aroused, and hurried up to the place where our Lord was approaching with the other three. When Judas came near, he immediately went up and embraced his Master. But his followers could not so easily distinguish Jesus in the uncertain light, surrounded as he was by the Eleven; and accordingly some words passed between our Lord and his captors before they came up and seized him. As they were laying hold of him, Peter struck at one with his short sword, and this incident led to a further interchange of words between our Lord and Peter, and also with his captors. At length they bound him tightly and led him away, while the disciples scattered in all directions.

The place and petition is the same.

We Come to Thee, Sweet Saviour

We come to thee, sweet Saviour,
Just because we need thee so:
None need thee more than we do,
Nor are half so vile and low.

We come to thee, sweet Saviour,
None will have us, Lord, but thee;
And we want none but Jesus,
And his grace that makes us free.

We come to thee, sweet Saviour,
With our broken faith again:
We know thou wilt forgive us,
Nor upbraid us, nor complain.

We come to thee, sweet Saviour,
For to whom, Lord, can we go?
The words of life eternal
From thy lips for ever flow.

We come to thee, sweet Saviour,
We have tried thee oft before;
But now we come more wholly,
With the heart to love thee more.

We come to thee, sweet Saviour,
And thou wilt not ask us why;
We cannot live without thee,
And still less without thee die.

F. W. Faber.

XXI.—The Betrayal and Arrest (1)

(*Make the preludes, as on p.* 29)

1. At the first sound of the approach of Judas and his band, the eight disciples who were near the entrance of the garden sprang up and hurried towards Jesus and the other three, who were already moving in their direction: so that there was some confusion round about our Lord when Judas came up. He, of course, could not mistake his Master, and went straight up and kissed him. How could he act so? we are inclined to ask. But, alas! it is possible to become very callous and shameless. It looks as if the rest could not at all realize what Judas was about, but gathered round, thinking that he was still one of themselves. Have I, while being taken as a friend and companion, been acting the traitor?

2. *Friend, whereto art thou come? Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?* Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto thine. Meekness is not tameness; it is no mere negative virtue. It is actuated by the most positive desire to conquer the heart of our enemy, of one who has wronged us, and to bring him to God. *He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before his shearer. Ille ut agnus innocens non negavit Judae osculum* (He like an innocent lamb refused not the kiss of Judas).

3. The traitor had given them a sign: *Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he; hold him fast and lead him away carefully*. But the rest of the disciples had pressed so closely round that in the dim light the temple police were still uncertain whom to apprehend. Notice how our Lord dominates all; he cannot be rushed. Our arrangements, however perfect, do not force God's hands: all shall be done as *he* has arranged. And even when we have fast hold, and are carefully leading away our prize, our care is all in vain unless the Lord guard us. *Tenui eum nec dimittam*. But unless God hold me fast, I shall certainly let him go.

XXII.—The Betrayal and Arrest (2)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 29*)

1. After Judas had fallen back, our Lord came forward, separating himself from the knot of his disciples. *Whom seek ye?* he asked. They answered him: *Jesus the Nazarene.* Jesus said: *I am he.* It is possible that even without any miracle he could have escaped, but, in fact, he came forward and presented himself to his enemies. He made it easy for them to arrest him. *En rex noster ingreditur ante nos, qui pugnabit pro nobis* (Behold our king goes forward in front of us, to do battle in our cause). Let us thank him for all those courageous followers of his, who, like St Thomas of Canterbury, have come forward to face death, when this seemed to be most for God's glory and the good of the Church.

2. When he said, *I am he,* they drew back and fell to the ground. Whether this happened to all, or only to some in front, may be doubtful. It is probably for the sake of his disciples that he shows this sign of power. They must be assured that of himself he is laying down his life for his sheep, not by compulsion; that he is fully able to overcome his enemies, if it were his will to do so. We, too, must be firmly convinced of this; we must never allow ourselves to imagine that God's enemies prevail because they are more powerful. *As it has pleased the Lord, so it is done; blessed be the name of the Lord.* It is a great grace to have this lively faith in the almighty providence and governance of God.

3. Again he asked, *Whom seek ye?* and again they stammered out, *Jesus the Nazarene.* And now he added the words: *If it is me you seek, let these go their way.* It was equivalent to a command: You shall not touch a hair of their heads. So, adds the Gospel, were fulfilled the words: *Of those whom thou hast given me I have not lost any.* No, indeed, my Jesus: I am sure none is lost through fault of thine; may none of thine be lost through fault of mine.

XXIII.—The Betrayal and Arrest (3)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p.* 29)

1. *Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus.* This is the beginning, the first act, of personal violence that has ever been actually committed upon our Lord. The last also will be upon his sacred hands—the driving in of the nails. They know not what they do. Ah! my Lord, give me not, as it were, leave to begin, thou who knowest where I may end. Thou seemest to agree to the first step we take towards binding thy hands, so that, at last, thou art rendered practically powerless to help us.

2. To see them lay hands on Jesus roused Peter's indignation. *Shall we strike with the sword?* and before the answer came, he had struck, struck off Malchus' ear. Why is not Peter immediately set upon and struck down? Why, though they already have their hands on Jesus, do they apparently leave it to him to deal with the matter, and to prevent any further disturbance or interference with their doings? Why? and why, too, have *I* been so often saved from the consequences of my rash acts, done with no leave or sanction from him? Why is it *that temptation hath not come on you but such as man can bear* (1 Cor. x 13).

3. That will do, Peter; *put up your sword into its scabbard.* And, strange to say, there seemed to be no harm done, for Malchus' ear was quite whole. Not only is Peter protected from the consequences for himself of his rash act, but the actual harm done to another is set right. *O fons amoris perpetui, quid dicam de te* (O fountain of ever-flowing love and kindness, what am I to say of thee). How shall I ever come to be unmindful of thee, who hast been so good as not to forget me, even after I had gone bad and ruined myself? It is thou who art ever serving me, rather than I thee (*Imit.*).

XXIV.—The Betrayal and Arrest (4)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 29*)

1. Peter's impulsive action is made the occasion by our Blessed Lord for giving four reasons why we should be prepared to submit to what our Father has arranged for us. It is worth while to reflect a little on each of them.

The first is indicated in the words: *Those who take the sword shall perish by the sword.* Allowing for due exceptions, to repel force by force is apt to end in our own destruction. There is a certain presumption in favour of meekness. *Blessed are the meek.* The sword of the tongue provokes a counter-thrust, and the quarrel becomes deadly. *When he was reviled, he did not revile.*

2. Again: *Thinkest thou that I cannot ask my Father, and he will give me twelve legions of angels?* God's resources are boundless, and though it is true that we may have to use our feeble endeavours to ward off injury, yet we should bear in mind that God has no need of our help. Prayer can do more than any mere physical force. *Unless the Lord guard the city, he watcheth in vain that is guarding it.*

3. Again: *How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled that so it must be?* This should comfort us when things go wrong. God has a well-considered plan, and we must not spoil it. He has often many graces depending on our submission. Did we but know *our* Scripture, the things that have been written down concerning us, if only we are humble and obedient!

4. Last and most touching of all: *The chalice which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* Every trial is a gift from our Father; a potion mixed by a Father for the lips of his child. So St Ignatius writes of sickness: *Seeing that it is no less a gift than health.* A chalice presented to our lips: a medicine and a stimulant. *Domine, libenter patiar pro te, quidquid volueris venire super me* (*Imit.*).

Hymn at the Chapel of Imprisonment

Thou, O my Jesus, thou wast pleased
To bear the cross for me,
To shed thine own most precious blood
From sin to set me free.

Thou, Lord of heaven and of earth,
Amid thy creatures found,
Art with the wicked reckoned here,
And with transgressors bound.

Thou, for the tree of knowledge robbed,
Hast raised life's quickening tree;
By death thou hast our death destroyed,
And bound, the bound set free.

Thou, unto whom the gates of brass
In death's dark realm shall yield,
Amidst the living in the gloom
Of prisons art concealed.

XXV.—The Betrayal and Arrest (5)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 29*)

1. At length Jesus chose to turn his attention to those who were holding him. *So you have come out to me as to a robber: I have been daily with you in the temple, and you did not lay hold of me. But now the Scriptures are to be fulfilled: it is your hour now, and the power of darkness.* He reminds them of their powerlessness to seize him, as long as he chose to retain his freedom of action. He reminds them, too, that now that they are having their own way, they are the instruments of the devil and his evil spirits. You are allowed, he seems to say, to have your own way, and to do the devil's work. Self and darkness go together. *Give me my portion and let me go:* and the prodigal was set to feed swine.

2. They then bound him: very tightly, we may be sure, and, as they thought, very securely. There will be no possibility of escape this time. This was one of the unceasing pains our Lord had to endure, probably till the cross was laid upon his shoulders. St John alone mentions it: perhaps he was the last to run right away, and so saw it actually done. *Et Dei manus pedesque Virgo Mater alligat,* sings the Church on Good Friday: See how the Virgin Mother sweet Doth gently bind his hands and feet. That was that he might lie in the manger; this that he may die on the cross.

3. *All leaving him, fled.* All: even Peter and John, at least so as to get out of the way for the time being. *Ecce nos reliquimus omnia et secuti sumus te* (Behold we have left all things, and have followed thee). But, alas! here are they now leaving him. Have we, after giving up all other things, given up Jesus as well? Alas! permit it not, O Lord. *Incoeptum est, retro abire non licet, nec relinquere oportet* (*Imit.*) (A start has been made, there must be no going back, leave him we must not).

JESUS AT THE HIGH PRIEST'S PALACE

Jesus has been arrested by the temple police, by order of the high priest; but their action was apparently sanctioned by the Roman governor, as a band of soldiers had accompanied them.

Jesus was led straight to the palace of Caiphas, the high priest. The porch of this palace may have opened into a court or quadrangle, on one side of which Annas, the predecessor and father-in-law of Caiphas, had a suite of rooms. At any rate, we may adopt this supposition.

Jesus was brought first into the presence of Annas, and as soon as the Council had assembled, he was led away from Annas to the Council hall.

St Peter's denials took place at the porch and in the quadrangle.

The place is sufficiently indicated by the foregoing remarks.

The petition is as usual.

That day of wrath and grief and shame
Shall fold the world in sheeted flame,
As psalm and Sibyl songs proclaim.

What terror on each breast shall lie,
When, downward from the bending sky,
The judge shall come our souls to try!

The trump, through death's dominions blown,
Shall summon with a dreadful tone
The buried nations round the throne.

Nature and death in dumb surprise
Shall see the ancient dead arise,
To stand before the judge's eyes.

And lo! the written book appears,
Which all that faithful record bears,
From whence the world its sentence hears.

The Lord of judgement sits him down,
And every secret thing makes known;
No crime escapes his vengeful frown.

Ah! how shall I that day endure?
What patron's friendly voice secure,
When scarce the just themselves are sure?

XXVI.—Jesus at the High Priest's Palace (1)

(*Renew the petition, as on p. 29*)

1. Annas questioned Jesus about his disciples and doctrine; and Jesus made answer that all his doings and words had been open, and that there were plenty of witnesses of both that could be examined. We owe it to ourselves and to our Master to be above-board, to be perfectly straight, as he was, to have witnesses of our conduct, as far as may be. We owe, no doubt, secrecy and privacy to others in some things, but we must not be underhand; rather let us pray to be children of the light. To be utterly straight and true was, indeed, a chief characteristic of the Sacred Heart. *Make my heart like unto thine.*

2. For this answer Jesus received a blow in the face from one of the attendant guards, who, no doubt, had reason to believe that Annas would not be displeased at this outrage to his prisoner. *Answerest thou the high priest so? If I have spoken ill,* said Jesus, *give testimony of the evil; but if well, why strikest thou me?* Jesus was struck, as though he had been insolent, whereas he had only been plain-spoken. Plain speaking is often necessary, insolence never; but the one may be mistaken for the other. *Pone, Domine, custodiam ori meo, et ostium circumstantiae labiis meis, ut non declinet cor meum in verba malitiae* (Put a guard upon my mouth, and at my lips a door that opens and shuts aright according to circumstances).

3. Annas found he had nothing to gain by prolonging the interview, and sent him forthwith to Caiphas and the Sanhedrim, still bound. The words *in bonds* are again St John's; he alone of the Apostles saw Jesus pass across the quadrangle. How his heart was troubled! And he saw, too, it may be, the mark of the blow across his face. His loving and beloved Master and Friend! How was it going to end? He has heard, too, Peter's first denial—Peter, his greatest friend among the Apostles. *Passio Christi, conforta me,* especially when my friend becomes a stumbling block to me.

O king of dreadful majesty,
Who grantest grace and mercy free,
Grant mercy now and grace to me.

Good Lord, 'twas for my sinful sake
That thou our suffering flesh didst take;
Then do not now my soul forsake.

Thou soughtest me when I had strayed;
Thy blood divine my ransom paid;
Shall all that love be fruitless made?

O just avenging judge, I pray,
For pity take my sins away,
Before the great accounting day.

I groan beneath the guilt, which thou
Canst read upon my blushing brow,
But spare, O Lord, thy suppliant now.

Thou who didst Mary's sins unbind,
And mercy for the robber find,
Dost fill with hope my anxious mind.

XXVII.—Jesus at the High Priest's Palace (2)

(Renew the preludes, as on p. 47)

1. Jesus is standing bound before the Council. (*Thy bonds have made the martyrs feel That bonds for thee are sweet.*) They begin with the introduction of some false witnesses, witnesses who are ready to bear false witness, and have been primed in regard to some sayings of our Lord. But it was a clumsy business, and produced no clear result. Jesus is silent under these dishonest charges, and still silent when questioned about them. *Est non parva prudentia silere in tempore malo, et introrsus ad me converti* (*Imit.*) (There is no little prudence in remaining silent in bad times, and in turning inwardly to God).

2. The high priest breaks in, hoping to get an incriminating answer from the accused. *I adjure thee to tell us if thou art the Christ, Son of the living God.* He is confident that Jesus will not deny it, and even silence can be, and, indeed, must be, taken to mean consent. But Jesus is not content to be silent now; he says *Yes,* to what he knows well is meant to be a question of equality with God. It is a clever question for the purpose, and the purpose is attained. *Non rapinam arbitratus est esse se aequalem Deo* (Phil. ii 6). He has never thought it a thing to be snatched at—this equality of his with God; but neither has he thought it robbery. Every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. He that shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father in heaven.

3. Jesus has made it clear that he claims both to be the Messias and to be equal to God. Caiphas rent his garments as a sign of his horror at the blasphemy. But he is reminded that one day he will see Christ coming in the clouds of heaven. What will be his horror then, if he repents not of his hypocrisy! *Quantus tremor est futurus.* Oh, how great shall be the fear, When on clouds the judge draws near, All to try with search severe. *Ne me perdas illa die.*

Dies Irae (*Conclusion*)

Though worthless all my prayers appear,
Still let me not, my Saviour dear,
The everlasting burnings bear.

Give me at thy right hand a place
Amongst thy sheep, a child of grace,
Far from the goats' accursed race.

Yea, when thy justly kindled ire
Shall bind the lost in chains of fire,
Oh, call me to thy chosen choir.

Lo, here I plead and suppliant bend,
Nor cease my contrite heart to rend,
That so thou spare me in the end.

Oh, on that day, that day of weeping,
When man shall wake from death's dark sleeping,

To stand before his judge divine,
Save, save this trembling soul of mine.

Yea, grant to all, O Saviour blest,
Who die in thee, the saints' sweet rest.

J. D. Aylward, O.P.

XXVIII.—Jesus at the High Priest's Palace (3)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 47*)

1. On hearing his solemn declaration that he was the Messias and true Son of God, the Council passed sentence of death on Jesus for blasphemy. Jesus died for the truth, and for the truth of his own divinity. Let me confess this truth with all my heart, yes, and with all my life. Let me live so as to bear witness to it, so as to testify that it is truly my God, the very God whom I have outraged by sin, who has deigned to die for me, that my Saviour and Redeemer is my God. What does my past conduct look like, St Ignatius asks, in the light of this truth, and my present attitude?

2. As a condemned criminal Jesus is now the victim of the vilest insults, first on the part of the very members of the Council, and then of the servants and guards of the palace, into whose keeping he passed for the rest of the night. They buffeted him, they spat upon him, they blindfolded him, they mocked him; and when weary of tormenting him, they would have thrown him into a cell and bolted the door. They are quite confident that he can do nothing to escape from their hands. They would not have thought it necessary to stand on guard outside that barred door, but it is worth our while to take our *hour of guard*. When I was in prison, you watched outside: yes, and you took me out of prison, and gave me to my friends. He forgets, he overlooks nothing.

3. Very early in the morning a meeting of the Council was convoked, and Jesus was brought before it that the sentence might be ratified in a more formal way. Again, Jesus affirmed his equality with God, as true Son of God, as the Son of Man of prophecy, for whom a throne is set beside the Most High. It has been a fatiguing time for the ringleaders of the conspiracy, but they are encouraged by the thought that before the day is out, the enemy of their peace will have been disposed of. But can peace be so attained? Can God be thus put out of the way in a day?

Thou, light of men, the pledge of peace
Made betwixt earth and heaven,
Amid the creatures of thy hands
Here unto bonds art given.

But thou, like Samson blind and bound,
Hast crushed thy foes at length;
Thine own life thou hast sacrificed,
And shown in death thy strength.

Thy bonds have made thy martyrs feel
That bonds for thee are sweet,
Bright is the road to death, that shines
Marked by thy blessed feet.

Jesus, the very thought of thee
With sweetness fills the breast,—
His breast, who is thy bondsman here,
Who waits in heaven thy rest.

Order of Compline, 1880.

XXIX.—Jesus in the High Priest's Palace (4)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 47*)

1. Meanwhile during those one or two hours of the night when the enemies of Jesus had been busy at the palace, Peter had done what his Master had foretold. He had made his way from the porch into the quadrangle, impelled by that natural devotion and attachment to his Master which he seemed to imagine would never allow him to do anything disloyal, nay, which he had boasted would keep him true even if all the rest should prove unreliable. He presumed on his own strength and had a disgraceful fall. *Pray, lest ye enter into temptation.* Pray that you may not go into the danger. *Ne permittas me separari a te.* Let me not by rash action be gradually withdrawing myself from thy special care.

2. Over and over again in answer to inquiries and taunts of maid-servants and men-servants, Peter disclaimed all connection with Jesus, his denials falling apparently into three main groups. I tell you, I know nothing of him, I am not one of his set at all; I do not know what you are talking about, I swear I do not, he is nothing to me. There are many ways of doing it. What would have happened to Peter had he confessed himself a disciple? Nothing, probably, of any moment. *Passio Christi, conforta me.*

3. As Jesus was led across the court from the Council chamber to the guardroom, he passed near Peter, and their eyes met; not by chance, but with loving intention and purpose on the part of Jesus, with shame and avowal of guilt on Peter's part. Jesus' intention is that friendship may be restored without delay, if possible; and it *is* possible, for Peter is already sorry. He wept very bitterly, he is forgiven very sweetly. But the price for that forgiveness, as for every grace that is given to the sinner, has still to be paid.

The scene now passes from the palace of the high priest to the Roman governor's dwelling. We may picture a hall, from which a few steps lead down into an open square, in which a large number of people can congregate. There is, perhaps, a barrier of some sort in this square within which only those are allowed to pass who have special business with the governor. He may either come out to them, and speak from the top of the steps, or they may be invited to enter the hall, where he has his judicial chair.

So much for the place, and the fruit to be asked for is as usual.

XXX.—Jesus before Pilate (1)

(Read the introductory note, and renew the petition)

1. It was probably about six in the morning when the Jewish authorities presented Jesus to Pilate for condemnation. They would not enter the hall or prætorium, in order to avoid ceremonial defilement. So Pilate came out to speak with them, and asked to be told the charge against Jesus. Pilate is calm and condescending; I will show these men, he says to himself, every consideration, but they shall not bully me. Pilate, like Peter, has much confidence in his own natural integrity. Before the morning is out, he will have played the coward no less than Peter.

2. The leaders are already up in arms: Do you not think it enough that we ask for sentence on one of our own people? Do you think we should appeal to you if he were not guilty? But, as Pilate professed his readiness to let them settle the case for themselves, they had to admit that it was the death sentence they were looking for, and so impossible for them to proceed without his intervention. You know very well, they seem to say, that it is the death sentence we want: we only ask you to confirm our own sentence: *Reus est mortis*. But Pilate also knows that the trial has been a mockery, and he will not be a mere tool in their hands. But will he remain firm? Not unless he will accept the help that Jesus is going to offer.

3. They had to formulate a charge for Pilate's own particular consumption. He is perverting our nation and setting up to be a king. Perverting our people, forsooth! they are but protecting the poor, ignorant people from this man's baneful influence! To protect those dependent upon us from any harmful influence is indeed a most important duty; but it can also be made the pretext for every kind of selfishness. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

XXXI.—Jesus before Pilate (2)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 57*)

1. *Setting up to be a king:* Pilate ordered Jesus to be led into the prætorium. Are you king of the Jews? he asks. Jesus replies by a question: Are you asking that question of yourself, out of a real desire to know in what sense I am a king, or are you merely asking if the charge, as my enemies make it, is true? Many questions cannot be answered until we agree upon the sense in which a word is being used. As a fact, our Lord was being charged with setting up to be a king in the very sense he had always repudiated. Pilate is receiving his first grace: there is a word to his heart urging him *not* to brush the question aside.

2. Pilate had heard, of course, of the Jewish expectations of a Messiah-king: but he resents the suggestion that he should have wanted to enter into any inquiry about that. *Am I a Jew?* Let us come to facts; what have you been doing? Alas! Pilate is too proud to seem anxious to learn the truth from Jesus. How many graces are rejected just that way! from not being humble enough to learn from those we regard as beneath us. And how all-important it is, too, to have the patience to try and understand exactly what others mean and are inviting us to inquire about!

3. Our Lord presses the grace on Pilate. He knows that Pilate really does want to know something of his actual claims: so he deigns to enlighten him. I am not a king in the sense of their accusation. You can see I have no material power at my disposal. But a kingdom I have, a kingdom not of this world, not resting on worldly power, nor to be founded or extended by force of arms. My kingdom is not hence, it is from above, and directs men from earth to heaven. *Dirige me, Domine, recto itinere in regnum tuum* (*Imit.*) (Let me march, O Lord, under thy standard, by the direct route into thy eternal kingdom).

XXXII.—Jesus before Pilate (3)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 57*)

1. So you *do* claim to be a king, answers Pilate. It is quite true that we cannot always give up the word that expresses our meaning and the truth, even though it gives trouble to those who want to compromise. Christ *is* a king, nay, he is King of kings; king *in* this world, though not of it. His laws are to be obeyed, no matter what laws other kings may make, which enjoin or permit what he forbids, or forbid what he enjoins. Divorce is an example in point. *Da mihi intellectum, et scrutabor legem tuam, et custodiam illam in toto corde meo* (Give me understanding and I will examine thy law, and I will keep it with my whole heart).

2. He has come, he says, to establish a kingdom founded on the truth; to make known the truth that is to guide man's reason and to rule his action: truth for the mind, truth for the conscience. Those that honestly desire to be true in thought and conduct will come to him, and will be subjects of that spiritual kingdom over which he rules. To act up to the truth he already knows, and to have a sincere desire to know the truth more fully, makes a man a follower of this king. *Ego sum veritas,* I am the truth, he says; he is the true light, that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world.

3. Another visionary, thinks Pilate, with the key to all truth. *What is truth?* He will not do much harm if that is all he is. And he went out to the Jews and told them his mind. I see no cause whatever for passing such a sentence as you call for on this man. Pilate is right, but he is also wrong: wrong in thinking that Christ is only one of many, and that his word will pass away. Heaven and earth shall pass, but not his word, not his teaching, not his kingdom, not his church.

XXXIII.—Jesus before Pilate (and Herod) (4)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 57*)

1. The Jews answered Pilate's statement that there was nothing to put Jesus to death for, by reiterating the charges of stirring up the people all over the country from Galilee to Jerusalem. To these repeated charges Jesus made no answer, so that Pilate marvelled at his silence. Pilate is beginning to wonder how he is going to get out of the difficulty, but is not much concerned with doing strict justice. He is wondering, too, why they are so insistent, and recognizes that *envy* is at the bottom of it: envy, one of the seven deadly sins. Pilate's danger is cowardice: that of the Jews, envy. *Passio Christi, conforta me.*

2. Pilate can gain time, at any rate. As the accused began his disturbances in Galilee, he will send him to Herod, who happens to be in Jerusalem at the time. He hardly expects to settle anything by this expedient; as a matter of fact, the only result was to improve somewhat the relations between Pilate and Herod: they are on better terms, at Christ's expense. So it has often been since. *Recolitur memoria passionis ejus* (The memory of his passion is renewed). Nay, rather the memory of all he has suffered is effaced.

3. Herod is flattered, glad to have the opportunity of seeing and questioning, perhaps even of witnessing some prodigy, such as he has heard of. But as he cannot get even a single word from Jesus, he is made to feel a little foolish. He revenges himself by encouraging his retinue and guards to make our Lord look foolish, by throwing a white garment over him and mocking him in other ways. Many are made to look foolish because they will not encourage what is foolish and base. We want the grace to prefer to seem naught than be actually naughty. Do as you like, is his answer to Pilate: the Nazarene is more fool than knave.

XXXIV.—Jesus before Pilate (5)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 57*)

1. Pilate is now going to be very clever and politic, and at the same time very mean. He is going to pretend to take the Jews quite seriously. Yes, there can be no doubt that they are right; Jesus *does* deserve punishment, even if he be not deserving of death. Pilate will chastise him severely. At the same time he will show his respect for them and their nation, by sparing them, if they desire it, the shame of one of their own people being punished by the pagan soldiery. The people were already agitating for their right to liberate a prisoner at the time of the feast. From cunning and deceit, O Lord, deliver us: from my own cleverness, deliver me.

2. Pilate had never seen any sign of sympathy or concern as to the fate of one Barabbas, who was in prison for murder. So they shall choose between Jesus and Barabbas. The offer is made, and Pilate withdraws for a time. Meanwhile, Jesus is under guard. Pilate is much worried. What is to be done? There is a message from his wife: she has had very upsetting dreams about this Jesus. What next? he wonders. *Quare tristis es anima mea, et quare conturbas me?* (Why art thou sad, O my soul, and why dost thou trouble me?) Is it that I am trying to serve two masters? *Spera in Deo:* Hope in the Lord, and do thy duty.

3. He must hear what the people have decided. Which of the two will you have? There is a cry for Barabbas, and a yell: *Away with this man.* But what am I to do with him? *Crucify him.* But that's impossible; I will chastise him as I promised. No, no, crucify him. The multitude is furious; anything may happen. *Passio Christi, conforta me.* Give me fortitude to resist, patience to endure, constancy to persevere (*Imit.*). And Jesus! *Saturabitur opprobriis:* he shall be steeped in ignominy and insults. *Tolle, Tolle.*

XXXV.—Jesus before Pilate (6)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 57*)

1. Pilate has not entirely given in, and condemned Jesus to death, but he *has* promised to chastise him for causing trouble and disturbance; and now that the Jews have not used their privilege to set him free, he must at least go thus far. However, to let the Jews understand that the blame now rests entirely on them, he goes through the strange formality of washing his hands before the people, and of solemnly protesting his own innocence. I am innocent of the blood of this just man. *Lavabo inter innocentes manus meas.* I will wash my hands, and so take my place among the innocent. As well wash them in a dream: the smell of the blood remains.

2. The people accept the whole responsibility as far as they can, and Pilate's object is so far attained. *His blood be upon us and upon our children,* is their answer. A strange episode indeed! A kind of superstitious sham on the one side, and reckless passion on the other. Not thus lightly can those in power escape responsibility, nor thus rashly is it to be incurred, not where there is question of the precious Blood of Jesus. And has not all responsibility become in some way a question "of the body and of the blood of the Lord"? *Probet autem seipsum homo.* Yes, let a man prove himself.

3. Barabbas is released, and Jesus is taken over by Pilate's soldiers to be scourged. He is going through his great act of atonement and expiation in all its fulness. He is to be able to say a few hours hence: *Consummatum est.* Pilate may well have given instructions that the punishment should be exceptionally severe, as he still intends to make it serve as a sufficient alternative for the capital punishment which the Jews are clamouring for. *From the sole of the foot, unto the top of the head, there is no soundness therein. By his stripes we are healed,* the stripes that we have merited.

XXXVI.—Jesus before Pilate (7)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 57*)

1. See Jesus as he hangs by his hands from the pillar, after the last lash has fallen upon his naked body: *wounds, bruises, and swelling sores.* Without any sign of pity, he is cut loose, dragged rather than led to the drill shed, left lying on a bench, and given a few moments' respite, while the soldiers are considering what to do next by way of carrying out the governor's evident intention that he should be made as pitiable an object as possible. After a few moments he is set up on a stool in their midst. His dreadful wounds and sores *are not bound up, nor dressed, nor fomented with oil.* No, nothing is done to ease his pain; there is no good Samaritan *to pour in oil and wine and to bind them up.* It may be that I, too, do not always receive as much sympathy and attention in my ailments as I should like.

2. They have decided (is it Pilate's own suggestion?) to make of him a kind of mock king: a scarlet cloak, a crown of thorns, a sceptre of some sort of rush-wood. There is loud laughter as he tumbles from side to side under their kicks and blows; but at last he is decked out and enthroned. Everything combines to aggravate his pain and the misery of his condition. Whence, they perhaps wonder, comes the strength that enables him to sit upright at all? *Amor modum saepe nescit* (Love often knows no measure).

3. Then begins the cruel farce: the saluting and bowing and genuflecting, the spitting, the striking of his head with the wooden sceptre, and of his face with their rude hands. *I have given my body to the strikers, and my cheeks to them that plucked them. I have not turned away my face from them that rebuked me and spat upon me.* Did all take part? Were some ashamed to stand aloof? Did one and then another move off to another part of the shed, and so leave a few of the vilest to do even worse than is recorded?

XXXVII.—Jesus before Pilate (8)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 57*)

1. At length came the order from the governor that Jesus is to be brought into the prætorium. The cloak is hastily adjusted, the crown of thorns is pressed firmly about his head, the sceptre is fixed in his bound hands, and Jesus is brought in. Pilate moves out in front of the hall. I want you to understand, he says, that justice has been done: the man has been severely chastised; I find no ground for further punishment, nor, I think, will you find cause for further zeal or alarm. And as Jesus appears, and is led out, he adds: Look at him; look at the man. Let them see, he mutters to the soldiers, his lacerated flesh—the red robe of the scourging. *Ecce qui tollit peccatum mundi* (Behold him, who takes away the sin of the world).

2. No sooner had the high priests and their followers caught sight of him than they scream out: Crucify, crucify him. Pilate is disgusted: Do it yourselves, you fiends, I find nothing to condemn him for. Alas! it is not enough to be angry and disgusted at the brutal fury of the Jews. And yet how hard to stand firm now! Is it worth it? Is it worth the struggle to halt now, when one has gone so far? There is no word or sign from Jesus.

3. The Jews fall back upon the charge on which they had themselves condemned Jesus to death. We have a law, *and according to that law he ought to die:* his crime is that he made himself out to be true Son of God. Indeed, to look at him now, such a claim may well seem madness or blasphemy. But not to Pilate, who is more and more disposed to recognise something superhuman in Jesus. As the Jews seem to lose all sense of responsibility, his becomes greater and greater. *He feared the more: Magis timuit.* But not enough to drive out all other fear.

XXXVIII.—Jesus before Pilate (9)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 57*)

1. Pilate withdrew into the hall, and made a sign that Jesus should be brought in. *Whence art thou?* he asked. Jesus made no answer. It is enough that he is, like Pilate, a man, for Pilate to know how to act. Whence art thou, Pilate? A fundamental question for every man to ask himself. It is dignity enough for every man that he comes from God. God is the author, and, consequently, the owner of my being. Whence comes whatever we have of faculty to know and to act?

2. The fool, thinks Pilate. Can he not see that I am trying to save him? Won't you speak? *Do you not see that it is in my power to set you free, and in my power to crucify you?* Jesus reminds him that all power is from above, physical as well as moral, force as well as authority. You can do nothing without God. Whether we obey God, or disobey him, we do it with the power that he is bestowing. *Ecce omnia tua sunt, quae habeo et unde tibi servio* (Behold all things are thine, which I have and with which I render thee service). When had Pilate been so spoken to before? and when have we *not* heard these truths?

3. Yes, and because all power is from above, it matters much what kind it is, and for what purpose it has been given. What if it has been given on purpose to guide another to God, and is used to turn him away from God and from the truth? *Wherefore he that hath delivered me up to thee, hath the greater guilt:* greater guilt than you, Pilate, who, after all, were never established in your power on purpose to point out the Messiah to your people. Scandal! what is it but just that? making it more difficult for another to get to God.

XXXIX.—Jesus before Pilate (10)

(*Renew the preludes, as on p. 57*)

1. Pilate was more than ever anxious not to incur the responsibility of condemning Jesus to death. We are not told exactly how the Jews came to realize this; but they evidently felt that their prey was slipping from their clutches. They played their last card, humiliating as it was to their national pride. Other passions must yield to the ruling passion, which in this case is envy. *If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar's friend. For whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar.* You will be displeasing Cæsar, if you do not put Jesus to death. The Jews championing the rights and honour of Cæsar rather than see their rival spared!

2. Pilate made his choice: he has made up his mind; the struggle is over. *Lead us not into temptation.* The platform is laid out upon the pavement below; the judicial chair is prepared. It was the day of preparation preceding the Pasch; it was nearing the sixth hour. Pilate, like many another weak man who is ashamed of his weakness, will veil his shameful deed under a few sarcastic words: True, true, I cannot tolerate a king of the Jews. *There is your king: look at him.* He is answered by a yell: *Crucify him.* Must I? *Must I crucify your king?* I fear I must; yes, if a king you will have, there is no other course. *Ut non declinet cor meum in verba malitiae ad excusandas excusationes in peccatis.*

3. We have no king, *no king but Cæsar.* Pilate has obtained his little triumph; his sarcasm has maddened the Jews into admitting their subjection to Cæsar. A petty triumph, a mighty defeat. He gave the word, and Jesus is taken over by the executioners for crucifixion. Pilate re-enters his house; it is finished, *Consummatum est.* He goes home to his wife.

Steep is the Hill

Steep is the hili, and weary is the road,
Beneath that crushing load;
And he who treads it with a grace so meek
Is bruised, and faint, and weak;
His mighty love alone can aid him there
That heavy cross to bear.

Oh, if we would in spirit, day by day,
Follow this blood-stained way,
With loving sorrow, storing as a prize
The contrite thoughts which rise,
For us the road to Calvary would be
The road to sanctity.

Our crosses then would never more appal,
They are so light and small;
And we might understand the saints' sweet cry,
"To suffer or to die";
And learn to watch affliction's waves increase
With all enduring peace.

XL.—The Way of the Cross (1)

We can easily bring the scene before our minds: the narrow street leading down from Pilate's house to the city gate, and then becoming a rough track leading up to Calvary. Renew the petition, as on p. 29.

1. The scarlet cloak is now laid aside, and Jesus is made to put on his own clothes. This, indeed, must be recalled as a very painful moment, when we remember how our Blessed Lord's body has been all cut up by the scourging. Why was it thought necessary to make the change, which the Gospel explicitly makes mention of? Perhaps because it is felt that with the death-sentence there is an end to all make-believe and buffoonery. It must be faced in one's own clothes, those one has woven by one's daily actions.

2. The cross is laid upon his shoulders, and Jesus sets forth for Calvary with two others: two criminals who are to be executed at the same time. What a strange fate for those two men—two ruffians—to be fellow-sufferers with the world's Redeemer, the divine Saviour, the God-man! The temporal punishment of their crimes they must endure; but the eternal they may escape, if they will, through the sufferings of him whom they are made to follow down the street. *Now let us follow, if we can, The road of selfish ease.*

3. It soon became evident that our Lord's strength is all but exhausted. The soldiers lay hold of a man who happens to be re-entering the city from the country outside, and oblige him to carry after Jesus the cross, under the weight of which he has already fallen to the ground. He could, indeed, have found the strength, but prefers to receive the help as a favour. He allows us to help when he could so easily do without us. To carry the cross on which Jesus is to die: so he allows even us to help him in some small way, while reserving the most painful sacrifice for himself. *For Jesus' sake we have taken up this cross, for Jesus' sake may we go on carrying it to the end* (*Imit.*).

Steep is the Hill (*Conclusion*)

Alas, the world's bright fields have ever been
So gay and fair a scene,
That our good angels have hard work to do
To keep us brave and true;
To turn our wandering feet with constant care
To the calm paths of prayer.

And yet, those shady paths how sweet they are;
Their perfume from afar
Would draw us on, if we were not engrossed
By earth's alluring host,—
Those fading pleasures ever false and vain,
And marked by many a stain.

Let us henceforth with our own hearts be stern,
That they may quickly learn
The rules of daily, self-denying strife,
While dangers are so rife;
Oh, let us urge them on with mighty sway,
Nor linger on the way.

Lady Catherine Petre.

XLI.—The Way of the Cross (2)

(*Renew the petition, as on p.* 29)

1. There followed him a great crowd of people, and among them a number of women who bewailed and lamented him. They had seen him do many good and kind actions, never anything that was unjust or unkind; and their hearts are full of pity and compassion. Shall I not grieve to think how little his love is appreciated, with what injustice and ingratitude he is treated, and how little I, who know him better than most, have done to console or make reparation? *Cur igitur non amem te, O Jesu amantissime?* (Why then should I not love thee, O Jesus, who art so full of love?) *Many good works I have showed you from my Father. For which of those works do you stone me?* (John x 32).

2. *Weep not for me,* says our Lord, *but weep for yourselves and for your children.* We need not think that he is rebuking these women, or that he is not grateful for their sympathy, or that he will ever forget it, when their time of suffering comes. But his words are a reminder that there is suffering and chastisement that is sent in love and mercy, and chastisement that is sent in wrath and retribution, and the latter is a subject of tears and lamentation. The Passion of Christ is not all sorrow and tears, seeing that it is the cause of all our hope and joy.

3. *If in the green wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry?* Never would the sinless, the entirely innocent and guiltless soul and body of Christ have been made thus to suffer were it not that sinful and guilty man was good for nothing but the fire. *It were better for that man had he never been born.* Not even the sufferings of Christ can extinguish those flames, which shall for ever torment, and yet never consume, those dry branches that have been cut away from the green wood of the vine, or have refused to be grafted into the tree of life.

Sing loud the conflict, O my tongue,
The victory that repaired our loss;
Exalt the triumph of thy song
To the bright trophy of the cross;
Tell how the Lord laid down his life
To conquer in the glorious strife.

Our pitying Maker saw the waste
Caused by our ancient father's fall,
Through the forbidden fruit, whose taste
Had made him Satan's helpless thrall;
God then decreed the tree should save
Him whom the tree had made a slave.

* * * * *

Soon as the destined season came,
The Father's sole begotten Son,
Creator of this mighty frame,
Was sent commissioned from his throne;
Made flesh within the Virgin's womb,
He came to free us from our doom.

Behold within the manger lying,
And wrapt in meanest swaddling clothes,
The heavenly Babe all feebly crying,
Acquainted even now with woes;
See how the Virgin-mother sweet
Doth fondly bind his hands and feet.

XLII.—Calvary (1)

(*Renew the petition, as on p. 29*)

1. On arriving at Golgotha, an eminence shaped somewhat like a man's skull, they offered Jesus the usual drug which had some effect in rendering the victim less terribly alive to the torture of crucifixion. It was a bitter compound, and Jesus just put it to his lips and tasted it, but would not drink it off. He very deliberately rejected even this slight alleviation of the suffering which awaited him. Perhaps the two thieves got a larger portion in consequence. It was not this kind of alleviation or comfort in his sufferings that the Sacred Heart of our Lord was yearning for.

2. *They crucified him,* having first stripped him of his clothes. It seems likely that the cross was first set up firmly in the hole prepared for it; and that then, while the victim stood on some sort of stool tightly roped to the wood, his hands were nailed, and afterwards the feet. The rope was cast, and the weight now fell upon the nails. *Flecte ramos, arbor alta.* Bend low thy branches, lofty tree, Let thy stiff sinews loosened be; The native toughness of thy grain Be melted 'neath so sweet a strain. And with him were crucified two thieves: he was numbered among the wicked. He was made sin, says the Apostle: fixed in the penitential posture he has freely chosen, in which to make his act of expiation.

3. He kept on repeating: *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Surely he is thinking more of the sinner who is the cause of the anguish of his soul than of the Roman executioners who are tormenting his body. *Who held the nails that pierced thy hands, And made the hammer fall?* Surely he is pleading my want of clear knowledge as a ground for pardon. And yet, O my Saviour, I must confess my sin; and confess, too, my knowledge of my sin. Forgive me, for, alas! I have known but too well what I was doing in offending thee.

Now when full thirty annual suns
Had seen him draw this mortal breath,
Born to the glorious work he runs
Willing and dedicate to death—
Runs to the cross, the Lamb of God,
And sheds his sacrificial blood.

The bitter drink, the cruel thorn,
The smiting reed, the nails, the spear,
His tender side all rent and torn,
The blood and water flowing clear—
With what a strange, mysterious tide
Earth, sea, and sky are purified.

Bend, lofty tree, thine arms, and let
The twining fibres of thy frame
All their ungentleness forget,
Which from thy sterner nature came;
Receive thy God; grow mild for him,
And gently touch each suffering limb.

O Cross, deemed worthiest him to bear
Who raised us when in ruin hurled,
O ark divine, which floating there,
Where lay a wrecked and sinking world;
O ark, anointed o'er with blood
Shed by the suffering Lamb of God.

* * * * *

J. D. Aylward, O.P.

XLIII.—Calvary (2)

(Renew the petition, as usual)

1. By order of the governor a board was nailed to the top of the cross of Jesus, giving the reason for his crucifixion. It was written as follows: Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews. Pilate seems to have worded it so deliberately. He wanted the Jews to understand that he did not regard Jesus as some foolish impostor that claimed to be king in the ordinary sense of the term, but as one who in some true sense *was* king of that people. It was as a reproof to them that he ordered those words to be put up. Yes, they crucified their king, and they might have received him as such, in the sense he desired, without any rebellion against Rome.

2. The rulers protested immediately, and asked that the wording should be altered. They wanted a lie—viz., that Jesus had claimed to be a king in the ordinary sense, a thing which he had never done. He had never aimed at any mere worldly dignity or authority. *Domine Jesu, noverim te.* O Lord Jesus, may I know thee as thou art, and for what thou art: for one who came *not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give thy life as a redemption for many. What was thy crime, my dearest Lord? By earth, by heaven, thou hast been tried, And guilty found of too much love, Jesus our love is crucified* (Faber).

3. *Quod scripsi, scripsi* (What I have written, I have written). So far so good; but while it incensed the Jews, it remains as a sentence of condemnation against Pilate. He knew he was crucifying a true king of men, if not the Son of God, if not the King of kings and Lord of lords. Thou art my king, O Jesus; may that be written once for all in my heart and in my life, and may I never unwrite it at the instance of anyone.

Lines from the "Stabat Mater"

Weeping sore, the Mother stood
Nigh the cross, the fatal wood,
  Whereon hung her dying Son.
Through her soul, for anguish crying,
Sunk in sorrow, spent with sighing,
  The prophetic sword had run.

Oh, how sad, how heavy laden,
Was that meek and blessed Maiden,
  God's true Mother undefiled:
Trembling, grieving, whelmed in woes,
When she saw the dying throes
  Of her own immortal child.

Who is he whose weeping eyes
Would not choose but sympathize
  With the Mother of our Lord?
Who is he that would refuse
Pity for such mother's woes
  Weeping o'er her Son adored?

Tortured for his sinful race,
She beheld each ghastly trace
  Of his scourging at the post:
She beheld her Son so sweet
Dying and all desolate
  When he yielded up the ghost.

XLIV.—Calvary (3)

(*Renew the petition, as on p. 29*)

1. Their work finished, the soldiers withdrew a little way from the crosses and cast lots for the clothes of the crucified, making four little bundles of them. The tunic of Jesus they set apart, as it was woven throughout in one piece, and they drew lots for that separately. How entirely the divinity is hidden, nothing being done to save those most sacred garments of Jesus from desecration. They know not what they do. In the Blessed Sacrament St Thomas reminds us that, no matter what is done to the accidents, the reality beneath is untouched: *Nulla rei fit scissura, Signi tantum fit fractura, Qua nec status nec statura Signati minuitur* (Not the reality is torn, The signs alone here broken lie, Neither of state nor station shorn Is he they clothe and signify). But here!

2. The soldiers did not interfere to prevent numbers of the people, and among them some even of the priests and elders, from coming right up to the cross and mocking the crucified. *Destroyest thou the temple of God, and in three days buildest it up! If thou art God's Son, save thyself so that we may see and believe. He saved others, himself he cannot save.* He saved others because he would not save himself.

3. Even one of the two thieves found strength to blaspheme. But the other reproved him, and added the wonderful words: We suffer nothing but our deserts, but this man hath done no evil. And turning to Jesus: *Remember me, Lord, when thou comest into thy kingdom.* He has acknowledged Jesus as Lord and King, and Jesus promises him a place that very day with him in paradise. How easily is won the undying gratitude of the Sacred Heart! *Breathe now, dear Jesus, as thy darkness falls, The peace no terrors quench, no pains dismay; Bring me all-crucified with thee to-day Into thy Father's halls.*

Oh, Come and Mourn

Oh, come and mourn with me awhile,
See, Mary calls us to her side;
Oh, come and let us mourn with her,
Jesus, our love, is crucified.

* * * * *

What was thy crime, my dearest Lord?
By earth, by heaven, thou hast been tried,
And guilty found of too much love;
Jesus, our love, is crucified.

Oh break, oh break, hard heart of mine,
Thy weak self-love and guilty pride
His Pilate and his Judas were:
Jesus, our love, is crucified.

Come, take thy stand beneath the cross,
And let the blood from out that side
Fall gently on thee, drop by drop,
Jesus, our love, is crucified.

O love of God, O sin of man,
In this dread act your strength is tried;
And victory remains with love—
Jesus, our love, is crucified.

F. W. Faber.

XLV.—Calvary (4)

(*Renew the preludes, and especially the petition, p. 29*)

1. A little before the sixth hour, or midday, it began to grow very dark in a way that struck a certain awe and fear into the bystanders. The numbers thinned away, and the few that still lingered about moved farther from the cross. This gave the Mother of Jesus, and St John, and the other holy women the opportunity of drawing near and contemplating the sad scene. They will remain there at the foot of the cross faithfully till the end. *Eia Mater, fons amoris.* Come, dear Mother, love's sweet spring, Let me share thy sorrowing, Let my tears unite with thine. Let my heart be wrapt in fire, Still to seek with fond desire Christ my God, my love divine (*Aylward*).

2. When Jesus saw them thus standing near, his dear Mother and the disciple he so much loved, he said to his Mother: *Woman, behold thy Son.* Am I, too, most loving Lord, a disciple whom thou lovest? Hast thou bidden thy Mother to see in me a son? Was it thy intention to commend us all in the person of John to thy most sweet Mother? Certainly in proportion as we are faithful in not running away from thy cross, she will take us to her heart, and love us for thy sake. And when we do play the coward, O most kind Virgin Mary, do not thou forget thy Son's word: *Memorare, O piissima Virgo Maria.* Christ, when these my days are done, Let thy Mother lead me on To the palm of victory.

3. Then he said to the disciple: *Behold thy Mother,* and from that time on he took her to himself, making a home for her along with himself, as long as he lived. Have I made a home for thee, dear Mother, in my poor heart? Can I speak to thee as to a mother? *Mihi jam non sis amara.* Mayest thou never be less sweet to me, dear Mother.

I Thirst

Hard is the painful wood, his bed of death;
And with his failing breath
He speaks again: and as he looks around
The crowd upon the ground
Are ready with their hate to do their worst;
And then he says: "I thirst."

His tongue is parched, his fevered lips are burnt;
And yet we have not learnt
That thirst to quench, that fever to allay;
We will not yet obey,
Nor give him that he asks and longs to gain—
Oh, must he ask in vain?

Shall we continue thus his soul to steep
In woes that make him weep?
Shall we refuse the hearts he thirsts to win,
And yield them yet to sin?
The day will come, our memories will be curst
With those sad words, "I thirst."

Sweet Jesus, thou hast thirsted for each soul
That pants in sin's control;
Oh, break our fetters, that we may be free
To give ourselves to thee;
The world has held us; but its bonds we break,
And spurn it for thy sake.

Lady Catherine Petre.

XLVI.—Calvary (5)

(*Renew the petition, as on p. 29*)

1. The darkness became denser after midday, and lasted right up to the ninth hour: the silence, too, was profound, broken perhaps only by the moans of the sufferers on right and left. Jesus is praying his last prayer, making his own in fullest and deepest sense those utterances of the Psalmist that had reference to him. To suffer and to pray; to pray all the more intensely because of the suffering; to suffer the more patiently and lovingly because of the prayer: Help me, Lord Jesus. *Fiat mihi, Domine, possibile per gratiam, quod mihi impossibile videtur per naturam* (Let that, O Lord, become possible to me by grace, which seems to me impossible by nature).

2. Towards the end of the three hours, Jesus speaks again: *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* What a disclosure of the anguish and desolation of the Sacred Heart! Just the one highest peak remains lit up, the rest down to the lowest roots is in gloom and darkness. He is winning for us the grace of hope, notwithstanding our abandonment of God, our shutting out of the light of his countenance, our wilful plunge into the abyss.

3. A little later he utters the words, *I thirst;* and one of the soldiers raised a sponge steeped in vinegar to his lips. It was intended as some slight relief to his torment, but not thus could the pangs of that thirst be ever so little assuaged. Give me to drink, he keeps ever saying to us. I thirst for your soul, for its gratitude, for its love, yes, and for its help. I thirst for you to thirst after me. *Shall we refuse the hearts he thirsts to win, And yield them yet to sin? If thou didst know the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given to thee living water.*

Come, dear Mother, love's sweet spring,
Let me share thy sorrowing,
  Let my tears unite with thine,
Let my heart be wrapt in fire
Still to seek with fond desire
  Christ my God, my love divine.

Holy Mother, this impart,
Deeply print upon my heart
  All the wounds he dying bore,
Let me share his pains with thee,
Who so tenderly for me
  Deigned those sorrows to endure.

Let our tears in one same tide
Flow for Jesus crucified,
  Long as life shall warm my breast:
By the cross to take my station,
Share thy tender lamentation,
  This is my most fond request.

XLVII.—Calvary (6)

(*Renew the preludes, as usual*)

1. When Jesus had taken some drops of the vinegar upon his tongue, he uttered the words: *It is consummated.* All that it had been ordained for him to do, all that had been foretold in the sacred Scriptures, all that zeal for his Father's glory and love for men had impelled him to undertake, was accomplished. All, too, that ever has been and ever shall be done on earth through his merits to the praise of God, is taken up into his heart and presented to his Father. What remains is refuse: Man has been created to praise God, and so to save his soul. We, too, must endeavour to be able to say at the end, and after each action, not merely *it is over,* but it is *done,* it is *fulfilled.*

2. And, again, after a brief interval, crying out with a loud voice, he said: *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.* His soul departed from his body, and was received into his Father's arms. The sacrifice has been offered by our great High Priest upon the altar of the cross; in virtue of this sacrifice God is again Father to his rebellious creature, opens his arms to receive back the prodigal, is ready to adorn him once more with robe and ring, and to admit him to the heavenly banquet. *Mensae caelestis participes faciat nos rex aeternae gloriae* (May the king of eternal glory make us to take our place at the heavenly table).

3. *Bowing his head,* surely as a sign of his last *Amen* to all his heavenly Father's will. So be it. Thy will, not mine, be done. That which is pleasing to my Father, I do always. May we, too, when we come to die have given all but our last sigh. Let us, too, in the presence of our dying Saviour, say our *Amen.* O my God, I accept of death, as an act of homage which I owe to thy divine Majesty; as a punishment justly due to my sins, in union with the death of my dear Redeemer, and as the appointed means of coming to thee, my beginning and my last end.

Brightest of the Virgin train,
Do not then my suit disdain,
  Come and share thy grief with me.
Let me trace his sufferings o'er,
Bear the very death he bore,
  When they nailed him to the tree.

Feel the wounds he felt for us,
Drink the chalice of his cross,
  All for love of thy dear Son.
Screened by thee from flames divine,
Mary, guard this soul of mine,
  When the judgement day comes on.

Christ, when these my days are done,
Let thy Mother lead me on
  To the palm of victory:
Yea, when this frail flesh hath died,
Let my soul be glorified,
  Safe in paradise with thee.

J. D. AYLWARD, O.P.

XLVIII.—Calvary (7)

(Renew the preludes, as usual)

1. At our Lord's death certain prodigies occurred: the rending of the veil that separated the Holy Place in the Temple from the Court of Israel, a quaking of the earth and splitting open of the rocks, and appearances in their bodies of the dead to many in Jerusalem. All these prodigies were indicative of the breaking down of those barriers and prison-gates, behind which the devil had succeeded in thrusting man back, and cutting him off from God. Nothing now can hinder man from access to God: no barrier is fixed and impassable. It has pleased the Father to bring all things into harmony in him and through him, alike the things on earth and the things in heaven, making peace through the blood of his cross (Col. i 20).

2. The centurion and his soldiers were struck with awe, with true religious awe, realized God's action, and more or less explicitly confessed that Jesus was divine. *Vere Filius Dei erat iste* (Truly this man was the Son of God). One would, perhaps, have thought these men to be as little susceptible to any stirrings of faith and compunction as any could well be. But let us remember that the very rocks can be melted as the outcome of our Lord's death, and never despair of the conversion of the most hardened.

3. In spite of the darkness a good many people had lingered about near the hill of Calvary, probably of those who had some sympathy with Jesus. These now went back into the city striking their breasts. They were conscious that a great crime had been committed; a sense of guilt weighed upon them, guilt in which they had some share. I am not innocent of the blood of this just man. *O sov'reign body, broken on the Tree, Mine is the traitor kiss that hangs thee there; Yes, and the garden of thy pale despair, My heart's Gethsemani. Lo! mine the anguish of thy pierced side, My malice is that spear that woundeth thee; Yes, for thy recreant lover, Lord, for me, In silence thou hast died.*

Cor Arca Legem Continens

Jesus, behind thy temple's veil,
  Hid in an ark of gold,
On stones engraven, lay the law
  Thy finger wrote of old.

But in thy body's temple new,
  Thy life-blood's throbbing shrine
Held upon fleshly tables graved
  The law of love divine.

And when that heart in death was stilled
  Each temple's veil was riven:
And lo, within thy love's red shrine
  To us to look was given.

There make us gaze, and see the love
  Which drew thee for our sake,
O great high priest, thyself to God
  A sacrifice to make.

Thou, Saviour, cause that every soul
  Which thou hast loved so well,
May will within thine opened heart
  In life and death to dwell.

Roman Breviary, 1879.

XLIX.—Calvary (8)

(Renew the preludes, as usual)

1. Meanwhile, before they had received news of the death of Jesus, the rulers had petitioned Pilate that measures should be taken to hasten the death of all the three crucified, so that the bodies might be removed from sight before the great feast-day, which was to begin at sunset. Pilate agreed to this. They are providing for the decent celebration of the festival, making *clean the outside of the cup and the dish,* while themselves remaining within *full of rapine and uncleanness.* Outward decency and decorum can go with the satisfaction of the basest and vilest passions. Out of sight, they say to themselves, out of mind; soon no trace will be left of this unfortunate business.

2. Accordingly, two or three men were despatched by Pilate to break the legs of the crucified, according to the usual method; but finding Jesus already dead, they did not break his legs, but one of the soldiers unconcernedly ran a spear through his side, from which there issued blood and water. He will retain that wound for ever, along with those of feet and hands, in his glorified body, and it will direct the thoughts of all straight to his heart, symbol of all that makes him loving, lovable, and beloved. *Cor arca legem continens.* O tender heart, strong heart which doth enshrine The whole sweet law that rules the heart of man; No longer held as slaves beneath a ban, Grateful and free we live by love divine (*R. Mulholland*).

3. St John saw all this with his own eyes, and insists upon the absolute truth of that to which he testifies. So was fulfilled the Scripture which foretold: *They shall look on him whom they have pierced.* Let us add our share to this fulfilment by many a long and loving look at him who hangs upon the cross, wounded even after death, alas! so often in his Sacred Heart. There make us gaze, and see the love Which drew thee for our sake, O great high priest, thyself to God A sacrifice to make.

L.—The Burial

(*Renew the petition, as on p. 29*)

1. As soon as Joseph of Arimathea knew that Jesus was dead, even before Pilate had been informed, he went boldly to the governor, and asked to be allowed to take over the body of Jesus. Pilate first made sure that he was dead, and then gave permission. Up to this time Joseph had more or less concealed his sympathy for Jesus from fear of the rulers, but now all his fear has vanished. This is the very fruit that we desire to gain from our reflection and prayer in these considerations. *Passio Christi, conforta me:* Passion of Christ, strengthen us, that we may overcome the world and the flesh, pride and sensuality, human respect, and the allurements of the senses: that we may be crucified to the world, and the world to us.

2. Joseph was joined by Nicodemus, and together they came with servants to Calvary, carefully took down the body from the cross, cleansed it with great care and reverence, and laying it upon a winding sheet, carried it to a garden close by for burial. What a relief and consolation for Mary to see that sacred Body so tenderly handled, so reverently washed, so gently laid down, so carefully lifted and borne away. Go, thou, and do likewise. As often as ye did it to the least of my little ones, ye did it to me; and as often as you do it to me in the sacrament of my love, you do it for my mystical body, the Church.

3. At the grave the holy women looked on sorrowfully but with careful scrutiny at all that was being done; they watched the winding sheet being prepared with the aromatic spices and ointments, saw it wrapped closely round and round, noticed how the tomb had been newly hewn out of the firm, living rock, how the sacred Body was laid upon the clean, cool slab within, and how the great stone was rolled right up against the entrance of the sepulchre. *Factus est in pace locus ejus.* So may he rest in peace within our breasts. There they sat, watching and weeping, before that tabernacle, thinking: *It is good for us to be here.*

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